# MAN WHO BROKE UP THE MOLLY MAGUIRE GANG

## Eventful Career of James McParlan, Well Called Greatest of Detectives.

**Thirty-Four Years After His Wonderful Achievement in Pennsylvania, He Is the Center of Interest for His Work That Was Responsible for the Present Sensational Trials at Boise, Idaho—Lived for Years Among the "Mollies," Where His Life Literally "Hung by a Thread."**

Philadelphia.—While there is but slight resemblance between the horrible crimes committed in the mining regions of Idaho and Colorado and the bloodcurdling deeds perpetrated in the mining regions of Pennsylvania a generation ago, there is this extraordinary link betwen them, that the same man was instrumental in procuring the most important evidence for the government in both cases.

James McParlan, easily the greatest of living detectives, did more than any other one man to break up that terrible organization known as the Molly Maguires. James McParlan, 34 years later, drew from Harry Orchard in the Idaho penitentiary a "confession" of more awful crimes than the Mollies ever dared to contemplate.

Membership in the Mollies was not confined to miners. There were saloonkeepers, tradespeople, artisans, officeholders and men of no occupation in the organization. By whom it was started, and for what purpose, have remained secrets. Its motto was "Friendship, Unity and True Christian Charity," and the meetings of the lodges and of the county conventions were opened with prayer. Then, after prayer, the business of making plans for assassination would be taken up.

It was not, however, until in the early 60s that murders became frequent. Some boss of a mine, some obnoxious policeman who had clubbed a drunken Molly, some miner who had incurred some displeasure of a member of the order, or some citizen who had spoken of it disrespectfully would be either beaten within an inch of his life, or murdered occasionally. But the crimes were sporadic. During the civil war they increased rapidly in number, and by 1871 there was a reign of terror in the whole anthracite region, extending over five counties. During that year and the year following there were 48 murders and innumerable assaults and crimes against property.

### McParlan Becomes a Molly.

Gradually the enmity of the Mollies was directed toward the mine owners and the railroad corporations. One boss after another, who had made himself unpopular with the miners, was murdered. Mines were blown up or filled with water. Railroad property was burned or destroyed. Finally President Gowan, of the Philadelphia & Reading Coal and Iron company, seeing that the city and state authorities were powerless, determined to call on the Pinkertons for aid. They sent McParlan to the scene. That was in 1873, when McParlan was 29 years old.

McParlan came from the Pinkertons' Chicago office. He was born in Ireland, had come to this country when a young man and had had considerable experience with the world. Short and slightly built, but muscular, of fair complexion, with dark hair, broad forehead and gray eyes and wearing glasses, he presented a gentlemanly appearance. He had been coachman, policeman, clerk in a liquor store and had finally gone into business for himself. The Chicago fire wiped him out. Then he went to work for the Pinkertons.

Following his instructions to learn all he could about the Mollies, McParlan went to Pottsville, Pa. He changed his name to McKenna. He got acquainted with everybody. He was looking for work in the mines. He could sing a good song, dance a jig, pass a rough joke, be polite and attentive to the girls, drink his share of whisky and pay for it, and was always ready for a row or shindy of any kind.

He got a job in a mine. He insisted on working in his best clothes. Soon his coat was thrown aside, then his vest, and finally his shirt. He perspired and suffered under the unwonted toil. He soon learned, however, that it was not as the skillful miner or as the industrious laborer that admission to or influence in the Mollies was to be obtained.

So he gave that up and cajoled a half-drunken saloonkeeper into divulging some of the secrets of the organization. He got a few of the signs and passwords. With these he was enabled to palm himself off as a Molly, saying that he had been a member of the organization elsewhere, and had been obliged to leave the place on account of a crime he had committed. This raised him in the esteem of the Mollies and he was admitted to full membership and to their confidence. He had, however, to be initiated over again, because members of one lodge or division could not be admitted to the deliberations of other lodges or divisions.

### Prominent in the Order.

To attain his ends McParlan found that he would have to out-Molly the Mollies. He intensified the character he had first assumed. He became a loud brawler. He boasted of having committed all crimes, from petty larceny to murder. He was ready to drink, sing, dance, court a girl or fight. He pretended sympathy with the perpetrators of a crime after its commission, which he had been unable to prevent and the full details of which he was anxious to discover. He became secretary of his division. At meetings of the order he was the loudest talker and the biggest Molly of them all. But he never asked a man to join the order, and he never by word or deed suggested or encouraged a crime.

Circumstances compelled him to drink a great deal of bad whisky. He became sick in consequence. His hair fell out. He lost his eyebrows. His eyesight became impaired. He looked like a freak with his green spectacles, bald pate, rough shirt and old linen coat swaggering through the streets. No one suspected Jim McKenna, or dreamed that he was at work night face. Outraged citizens had formed vigilance committees to retaliate on the Mollies. McParlan was known as an active leader of the organization, and his life was in danger, not only from the Mollies, but also from other citizens.

### "The Air Is Polluted."

Finally, suspected by the Mollies, hated and feared by respectable citizens who did not know his real character, and half sick from the strain of the work, he begged to be relieved. "I am sick and tired of this work," he wrote in one of his reports. "I hear of murder and bloodshed in all directions. The air is polluted. I can't stand it much longer." Indeed, he would surely have been killed if he had remained, for the feeling was strong against him. So, toward the end of 1875 he returned to Philadelphia and was warmly welcomed by the Pinkertons.

In the following spring came the trials of about 50 men accused of murder or of complicity in murder. In the course of his opening for the government the district attorney startled the audience in the courtroom by announcing that among the witnesses who would be offered by the state was a man who for years had lived in the county, had associated with the Mollies, had been a member of the order, was familiar with its crimes and was prepared to identify the murderers.

This witness was known to the people of the coal regions as James McKenna, but his real name was James McParlan, and he was a detective, said the district attorney. When McParlan was called to the witness stand the audience could scarcely believe that the quiet, gentlemanly, yet cool and resolute detective was the wild and reckless Jim McKenna they had known.


### Eleven Mollies Hanged.

McParlan was on the stand four days. He told his story simply and amazed every one by his revelations. The most searching cross-examination failed to find a flaw in his testimony. When he told the story of his being suspected of being a detective, intense silence prevailed in the court room. For the first time the prisoners manifested uneasiness. There were many Mollies present, and they listened with blanched cheeks to the recital.

At the close of the trials Pres Gowan paid a fine tribute to McParlan. After warning the public that if there was another murder in that county by that society there would be "an inquisition for blood with which nothing that had been known in the annals of criminal jurisprudence could compare," he added:

"And to whom are we indebted for the security we now have? To whom do we owe all this? Under the divine providence of God, to whom be all the honor and glory, we owe this safety to James McParlan, and if ever there was a man to whom the people of this county should erect a monument, it is James McParlan, the detective."

As a result of the trials 11 men were hanged, and about 40 others sent to state prison. That was a death blow to the Mollies. They have not been heard from since then. And now, after a generation, McParlan is one of the central characters in the great drama, one of the scenes of which is being enacted in Idaho.

# Washington Day by Day

## News Gathered Here and There at the National Capital

## MRS. TAFT ACCOMPLISHED MUSICIAN AND LINGUIST


WASHINGTON.—Somewhat interested in the prospects of Taft's presidential boom is Mrs. Taft, wife of the secretary of "peace and war." If events continue in their present drift she is likely to be a prominent candidate for first lady of the land.

She thinks—and does not deny it—that "the judge" is the best man yet suggested for Republican candidate in 1908. She hopes that T. R. will continue of this mind. She says she thinks T. R.'s indorsement will help.

Mrs. Taft became acquainted with the inside of the White House when, at the age of 16, she was Helen Herron of Cincinnati, and visited Mollie Hayes, daughter of President Hayes, at the White House. Her father was John W. Herron, law partner of President Hayes.

Mrs. Taft takes great pride in being a thoroughly domestic woman. She is a musician, and an accomplished linguist. She organized and was the first president of the Cincinnati Symphony orchestra.

The children inherit the studious disposition of their father. The oldest daughter, Helen, led her classes in the cathedral school, from which she graduated last year, and now is preparing for Bryn Mawr college.

Robert Alphonso, the eldest, now 19, is an undergraduate at Yale. He expects to adopt the hereditary occupation of law. He took a special course two years ago at Oxford in English law and history.

Charles P. Taft, youngest of the family is named for his rich newspaper uncle in Ohio. At the Force public school in this city, he sits beside his crony, Quentin Roosevelt. He knows what he will be when he grows up—a soldier in the army. He plans to go to West Point as soon as dad will let him.

Secretary Taft is not a man of wealth. He has always had to live on his salary, and a secretary's salary does not go far in Washington.

The Tafts, therefore, do not entertain in any showy way, though they are able to select their friends from among the most interesting people, and their fondness for music has brought them in touch with musicians and artists.

## NO CABINET MEETING—TEDDY HAS PHOTOS TAKEN

BECAUSE President Roosevelt wanted to have his picture taken on horseback—at least so the story goes—a regular cabinet meeting was postponed the other day for the first time in the memory of the oldest attache of the White House.

The president, it is said, has been thinking for some time that he ought to have a few more photographs. As day after day passed without furnishing the necessary sunshine he became more and more nervous. On the particular morning in question, after the cabinet members had gathered the clouds suddenly disappeared and the sky was clear for the first time in two weeks.

Without waiting to give much of an explanation the executive told his advisers not to wait, but to come around again next day. Then he donned his riding clothes, telephoned the photographer, called for Captain Fitzhugh Lee, and hurried to the riding course at Rock Creek park.

For more than an hour the president rode gracefully in front of the photographer, usually leaping his horse over hurdles. Some splendid negatives were obtained and Mr. Roosevelt feels more than justified in postponing the cabinet meeting.

## JUSTICE HARLAN WINS BALL GAME BY HOME RUN


JUSTICE HARLAN of the United States supreme court, aged 74 years, made a home run and won the game in a baseball contest at the annual shad bake given by the Washington Bar association at Marshall Hall, Md., the other day.

When Justice Harlan went to the bat the score was a tie and the umpire had called two strikes and three balls. It was a critical and exciting moment, when Justice Harlan smashed the sphere a wicked swat squarely on the nose and drove it to deep center. He started around the bases and his leg work was really marvelous.

His sprinting qualities surprised and delighted the fans, who were wild with enthusiasm. The ball went over the head of the center fielder and was lost in the tall grass.

Before it was recovered Justice Harlan had reached the home plate, where he stood sipping a mint julep which had been prepared hurriedly for the agile Kentuckian as a reward for lining out a four-base hit and showing the younger element how to get around the bases.

It is feared there will be a vacancy on the supreme bench, as "Home Run" Harlan has already received offers of contracts from a number of ball teams which are weak at the bat and need heavy hitters.


## GRANDSON OF GEN. GRANT TO WED SOCIETY GIRL

THE most noted society event in Washington in many a year will be the wedding of Miss Helen Dent Wrenshall, a pretty and talented Washington girl, to Chaffee Grant, of San Diego, Cal., a grandson of the late Gen. Ulysses S. Grant, which will be a function of the early June. While the blood of the greatest general America has produced courses through the veins of the young future bridegroom, the bride-to-be boasts of a lineage aqually aristocratic. Miss Wrenshall says she is a lineal descendant of Alfred the Great.

When but a young boy young Grant was sent to Washington by his father to attend school. He remained here for two years, and during this period he became acquainted with Miss Wrenshall. Although very young the attachment was very strong, and after leaving the school he returned to Washington at least once a year.

After leaving school Grant went to California for his health and later moved to that state with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. U. S. Grant, Jr. After spending some time in the coast state he returned to Washington and entered a bank. While banking he was associated with Edward Wrenshall, the father of his fiancee, and Mr. Smith. He soon left the bank and went back to California, but not until he had the consent of his sweetheart to become his wife. After going to the coast he soon left off banking and started in the real estate business, which he still follows. His father, U. S. Grant, Jr., is one of the prominent business men of San Diego. The groom is also a nephew of General Fred Grant.